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United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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REVISED NEWS RELEASE

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U.S. District Court in Arizona to Remember District Judge Robert C. Broomfield

PHOENIX – Judges of the United States District Court for the District of Arizona will gather here next week to remember an esteemed colleague, the late Senior District Judge Robert C. Broomfield. Judge Broomfield died of cancer July 10, 2014, at a hospice in Phoenix. He was 81.

The court will hold a special memorial session on Wednesday, July 23, 2014, at 3 p.m. in the Sandra Day O'Connor U. S. Courthouse. The session will take place in the Robert C. Broomfield Special Proceedings Courtroom located on the second floor. The event is open to all who wish to attend, space permitting, and will be followed by a reception in the courthouse.

Judge Broomfield passed on the 29th anniversary of his Senate confirmation. Nominated by President Reagan, he was confirmed on July 10, 1985, and received his judicial commission on July 11, 1985. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor administered the oath of office at his investiture. Judge Broomfield served as chief judge of his district from 1994 to 1999 and assumed senior status on August 12, 1999. He carried a reduced caseload for many years, but stopped taking cases after becoming ill several months ago.

Considered an innovator in court administration, Judge Broomfield was highly visible in judicial governance, representing the Ninth Circuit on a number of national committees of the Judicial Conference of the United States. Chief Justice William Rehnquist appointed Judge Broomfield to the Budget Committee in 1997 and he served as a member until 2013. He also served on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act Court from 2002 to 2009, and was a member and chair of the Committee on Security, Space and Facilities from 1987 to 1995.

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Judge Broomfield regularly appeared before congressional committees to discuss budgetary, space planning and other issues. He contributed significantly to efforts to improve the management and budgeting of Criminal Justice Act cases. He also was influential in obtaining approval for and funding of the Sandra Day O'Connor U.S. Courthouse in Phoenix.

Prior to appointment to the federal bench, Judge Broomfield had served as a judge of the Maricopa County (Arizona) Superior Court from 1971 to 1985. He was the presiding judge of that court from 1974 to 1985 and presiding judge of its juvenile division from 1972 to 1974. Earlier in his career, he served as a superior court bailiff and was in private practice in Phoenix.

Chief Judge Raner Collins of the District of Arizona said his colleague will be deeply missed.

"Judge Broomfield was a judge's judge, a gentleman, and a stalwart in advancing innovation within the judiciary both in the state and federal courts," Judge Collins said.

Judge Broomfield's admirers from the bench and bar in Phoenix also include judges of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Circuit Judge Barry Silverman, who practiced and worked alongside Judge Broomfield in the Maricopa County Superior Court and as a federal magistrate judge, remembers a man who led by example and was beloved by colleagues and staff.

"I knew him for more than 35 years. He was a brilliant jurist, an equally brilliant practitioner of court administration, and yet an uncommonly kind and modest human being – an almost unheard of combination," Judge Silverman said.

Chief Judge Emeritus Mary M. Schroeder recalled Judge Broomfield as "a gentle giant of court administration. He was the role model for a generation of judges and lawyers who sought to improve our justice system in Arizona and the West."

In addition to a raft of Maricopa County honors, the American Judicature Society recognized Judge Broomfield in 1985 with a Special Merit Citation. He also received the National Center for State Courts' Distinguished Service Award in 1986, and a Distinguished Citizen Award in 2006 from the University of Arizona Alumni Association.

Born in Detroit, Judge Broomfield received his B.S. in 1955 from Pennsylvania State University and his LL.B. in 1961 from the University of Arizona College of Law.

Judge Broomfield served as a pilot in the Air Force from 1955 to 1958, and in the Arizona Air National Guard from 1958 to 1961. He also was an inactive member of the Air Force Reserve from 1961 to 1972.

Survivors include his wife of 55 years, Cuma; their son, Robert, Jr., and daughter, Alyson; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

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